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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
MONDAY, MAY 16, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Armenian FM: Turkey-Armenia Border Must Be Opened - Milliyet
Condi Goes to Iraq - Sabah
Condi in Erbil - Hurriyet
Barzani: No Concessions on Kirkuk - Hurriyet
Uzbek Troops Hunt for Insurgents in Andijan - Aksam
9 PKK Terrorists Killed in Tunceli - Sabah 5/15
Saddam Writes Memoirs in Jail - Hurriyet 5/15
Reaction to Koran Desecration Grows - Milliyet 5/15

OPINION MAKERS

Rice Pays Kurds a Surprise Visit - Yeni Safak
Bush to Meet Palestine's Abbas May 26 - Cumhuriyet 5/15
25 US Casualties in Iraq Over Past Week - Cumhuriyet 5/15
Iran Parliament's 'Nuclear Approval' - Radikal
Newsweek: Koran Desecration Report May Be Inaccurate - Yeni
Safak
Afghan Clergy Threatens US With 'Jihad' - Cumhuriyet
Mubarek's Son to Run for Egypt Presidency - Zaman 5/15

BRIEFING

US C-17s to Arrive in Incirlik in June: C-17 US military cargo planes are to be deployed at Incirlik Airbase beginning in the first week in June to transport logistical cargo to Iraq and Afghanistan, Sunday's "Hurriyet" reports. The US and Britain may also request the use of Incirlik for the rotation of their troops, according to the report. Diplomatic sources said that for the time being, the Turkish government decree allows only the transportation of logistical material like food, clothing, tents, and spare parts, as there has been no request for troop rotations. All flight and cargo details will be notified to Turkish authorities, "Hurriyet" writes.

Erdogan Attends COE Summit in Warsaw: Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan traveled to Warsaw Sunday to attend the two-day 'Summit of European Unity' meetings held by the Council of Europe (COE), papers report. "Milliyet" expects Turkey to urge the COE to adopt a decision to fight anti-Islamist sentiment in Europe. Reports also expect Erdogan to meet with Armenian President Kocharian on the margins of the summit. On Sunday, Kocharian met with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev to discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Aliyev later briefed PM Erdogan about the content of his discussion with Kocharian. Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanyan told "Milliyet" in Warsaw that an Armenian-Turkish intergovernmental commission can be set up to work toward the normalization of ties. Oksanyan added that a joint committee of historians to examine genocide claims, as proposed by PM Erdogan, could be also be established within the framework of the intergovernmental commission. Oksanyan said that the first priority for both sides should be the opening of the border between Turkey and Armenia.

Alpogan Due in Israel: Yigit Alpogan, Secretary General of Turkey's National Security Council (NSC), will visit Israel on Tuesday as the guest of Giora Eiland, Director of the Israeli National Security Council, the semi-official Anatolian Agency reported on Monday. Alpogan and Eiland will discuss ways to enhance cooperation between the two councils and exchange views on regional and international developments. Alpogan will also meet with Amos Yaron, Director General of the Israeli Ministry of Defense, and General Amos Gilad, head of the Political-Military Office of the Ministry of Defense.

Turkey's New National Security Document: Turkey's revised National Security Policy Document has been now been completed, "Radikal" reported on Sunday. The new draft describes separatist terrorism, religious fundamentalism,

and extreme leftist activities as the primary threats to domestic security, and global terrorism and nuclear danger as the leading foreign threats. The draft is to be submitted to the National Security Council (NSC) in June and, if adopted, will become official as of July. The 'nuclear axis' of North Korea, China, India, Pakistan, and Iran tops the threat list, "Radikal" claims. The document cites Al-Qaeda and the PKK as transnational terrorist groups. Greece, for the first time, has been removed from the list of foreign military threats, according to "Radikal."

Turkish Foreign Policy Meeting at UNA-NY: Turkey's Consul-General in New York, Omer Onhon, told a meeting on Turkish foreign policy at the United Nations Association of New York (UNA-NY) that positive aspects of Turkey-US relations should be taken into consideration when analyzing the relationship, the semi-official Anatolian News Agency reported over the weekend. Onhon said that 'multidimensional and rooted' Turkey-US ties ensured positive cooperation in places like Somalia, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and during both Gulf wars. Onhon reminded that Turkey recently took over the ISAF command in Afghanistan for the second time, and emphasized that Turkish-US relations had a brilliant future.

'TRNC' Warns Free Passage May End in Cyprus: Turkish Cyprus 'president' Mehmet Ali Talat warned over the weekend that Turkish Cypriots may stop traveling to southern Cyprus due to lawsuits filed by Nicosia against Turks for 'illegal use' of property in northern Cyprus. Talat said that the 'TRNC' has no intention of banning free passage between the two sides, but added that the Greek Cypriot lawsuits may discourage Turkish Cypriots from traveling to the south. The Greek Cypriot administration is demanding compensation from Turkish Cypriots using properties that belonged to Greek Cypriots before Turkey occupied the northern part of the island in 1974.

Turkey Offers Help to Uzbekistan: Turkey is closely monitoring developments in Uzbekistan, and expressed a readiness to provide assistance, the Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) said on Sunday. An MFA statement said that if the Uzbek government acts moderately against the protestors and civilian Uzbeks, this could prevent more bloodshed in the region.

Turkey-Greece Natural Gas Pipeline Project: A 300 km natural gas pipeline will be laid between Karacabey near the Turkish city of Bursa and Komotini in Greece, the semi-official Anatolian News Agency reported on Friday. The pipeline, which will transport Caspian and Central Asian natural gas to Europe via Turkey and Greece, is to become operational in 2006. Turkish officials said that 250 million cubic meters of natural gas will be carried through the pipeline annually. When connected to Italy in the coming years, the pipeline will have the capacity to carry 11-12 billion cubic meters of natural gas.

Saddam's C-4 in PKK Hands: According to an investigation by Turkish police, 190 kg of plastic C-4 and A-4 explosives seized in Turkey over the past year was produced in Portugal and sold to Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq War, "Milliyet" reported on Saturday. After the war, the explosives were seized by terrorist organizations. The PKK has reportedly brought some of these explosives into Turkey from northern Iraq to carry out terrorist actions. The paper notes Turkish Land Forces Commander General Yasar Buyukanit's warning last week that C-4 has become 'standard equipment' in the 'backpacks' of terrorists infiltrating into Turkey from northern Iraq.

Turkish Troops' Operation Against PKK: Turkish security forces killed nine PKK militants, two of them women, in an operation involving some 10,000 troops in Tunceli province in eastern Turkey, military officials said on Saturday. On Friday, three soldiers were killed and four were wounded in the nearby province of Bingol in an ambush by PKK fighters. Military officials said PKK members have been preparing for various actions in the area.

Agar Reelected Chairman of DYP: Mehmet Agar was reelected as chairman of the center-right True Path Party (DYP) with 1,071 of 1,081 votes cast during the eighth congress of the party held in Ankara on Saturday. Agar was the only candidate for the party leadership. On Sunday, DYP lawmakers Reyhan Balandi, Ummet Kandogan, Dursun Akdemir and Ibrahim Ozdogan resigned from their party when Agar failed to include their names on the party's new executive board. As a result of the resignations, the number of DYP seats in parliament dropped from 7 to 3.

Large Numbers of Theology Teachers Appointed to High Schools: The ruling AK Party has appointed some 3,022 theology teachers to high schools from 2003 to 2005. The number of such teachers appointed between 1999-2002 was only 200, "Milliyet" reported on Sunday. The Turkish Teachers' Union slammed AKP for making appointments in a 'partisan'

way, adding that the data indicates discriminatory staffing of teaching positions.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Uzbekistan; US-Turkey Relations

"A Flower That Did not Bloom"

Erdal Safak commented in the mass appeal "Sabah" (5/15): "Recent events in Uzbekistan cannot be viewed as another democratic revolution. This is mainly due to the lack of organized opposition and the ban imposed in Uzbekistan on the Soros Foundation. Moreover, Uzbekistan is not having an election, and President Kerimov is able to control the army and police force. . Nevertheless the uprising in Andijan came as no surprise. It had been expected, so Kerimov had taken certain measures to counter the demonstrations before they even started. For instance, he ordered the security forces to respond as harshly as possible. He also ensured Russian support against the possibility of another 'velvet revolution.' . The US reacted immediately by taking the side of protesters in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. But the US was silent about the incidents in Andijan. First of all, Uzbekistan has strategic importance for the US by virtue of the two US military bases established there. In addition, the rioting groups are radical Islamists of a kind that the US opposes. Given the circumstances, Kerimov is secure, at least for the time being. But we had better keep an eye on the other 'candidates' for 'velvet revolutions' -- Belarus, Armenia, and Azerbaijan."

"Social Unrest in Uzbekistan"

Yilmaz Oztuna observed in the conservative-mass appeal "Turkiye" (5/16): "Although the Tashkent government presented the riots in Andijan as a revolt by religious fundamentalists, the issue goes much deeper than that. Andijan is the capital of the Fergana Valley, which is the area of the world (after Istanbul) most densely populated by Turks. Turkey is not against Uzbek leader Kerimov's efforts to bring all of the Turkic republics together under one umbrella. Turkey also understands Kerimov's efforts to protect his country against a Sharia regime. But it is not right for a person who has a communist background to have such deep concerns about religious fundamentalists. Steps he has taken -- closing Fethullah Gulen's schools, limiting the number of the Uzbek students being educated in Turkey -- are unnecessary measures created by an unjustified suspicion. Kerimov realized the problems in Afghanistan at an early stage, and he even allowed the US to establish military bases in his country. Washington did not approve of the incidents in Andijan. In short, all of the Turkic republics - including Uzbekistan -- need more democracy."

"Relations Cannot be Put on Auto-Pilot"

Yasemin Congar wrote from Washington in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (5/16): "Auto- pilot has become the operative phrase in Washington for analyzing the current stage of Turkish-American relations. American experts note that bilateral relationships cannot be pursued on auto-pilot. They believe that Ankara's political leadership should take some steps to overcome the turbulence. . A recent meeting on Turkish-American relations in Washington resulted in a number of messages being passed to Ankara. Turkey and the United States should engage in a more effective political partnership. Turkish political leaders should be able to concentrate on this by realizing the two countries' shared interests in the Middle East and the Islamic world. If the Erdogan-Bush meeting on June 8 ends with progress on that issue, then diplomats in both countries will be working on a better, more productive cooperation between the two countries in the period ahead."

EDELMAN